

REMARKS

Claims 1-4, 6-13 and 15-21 are pending.

The drawings submitted with the response of July 11, 2003 are intended to help explain the invention. They show how, in one embodiment of the invention, the decorative part and the reinforcer may be welded together over a small area of contact to give a closed box- or crate-type component.

Applicants have amended claim 13 and canceled claim 14 to address the formal matters noted by the Examiner.

Claims 1-11 and 13-17 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Meier et al. (US 5,830,552). Applicants respectfully traverse this rejection.

Meier et al. teaches a connection between a core plate, made of wood, and a cover plate by means of mould clamps. The wood is thereby connected with the coating material with some kind of mechanical clamping at the edges.

The present invention differs from Meier et al. in the kind of connection and the chemical composition of the materials to be connected. In the instant invention, there is a strong and intimate connection between the decorative part and the reinforcer caused by welding the two parts together. The parts are preferably composed of a thermoplastic, in particular polypropylene. In a preferred embodiment of the invention, the decorative part is a composite material comprising a decorative layer and a heat cured layer, both sitting on a support layer of polypropylene (specification page 9, lines 1 to 5). Furthermore, the cover plate of the present invention has a box- or crate-type

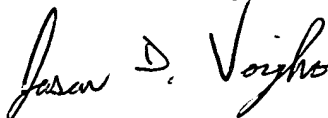
KLEMM et al., Ser. No. 09/640,092

structure (which may be imparted by the box- or crate-type structure of the reinforcer)
which is light weight and strong.

Therefore, the invention of the claims as amended would not have been obvious
in view of Meier et al.

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Respectfully submitted,
KEIL & WEINKAUF

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Jason D. Voight", written in a cursive style.

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